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Summary record of the 16th meeting
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Chairman: Mr. Koudelka (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Czech Republic)

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In the absence of Mr. Wali (Nigeria), Mr. Koudelka (Czech Republic), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 54: Globalization and interdependence (*continued*) (A/60/111 and A/60/115)

(a) Globalization and interdependence (*continued*) (A/60/129 and A/60/322)

(b) Science and technology for development (*continued*) (A/60/184)

(c) International migration and development (*continued*) (A/60/205)

(d) Preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of funds of illicit origin and returning such assets to the countries of origin (*continued*) (A/60/157)

1. **Ms. Holguin** (Colombia) said that the challenges posed by migration include recognition and acceptance of diversity, socio-economic integration, the development of human capital and the treatment of remittances. Origin, transit and destination countries had a joint responsibility to ensure respect for the dignity of migrants and their families and the protection of their human rights. Countries must cooperate on an urgent basis to ensure that the negative aspects of migration were addressed and resolved. Her delegation therefore reiterated its support for an international conference on migration, the convening of a High-level Dialogue on the subject and the initiative by the Peruvian Government to organize a regional meeting in April 2006.

2. Remittances to countries of origin by migrants were assuming increasing importance in Latin America and the Caribbean. More than four million Colombian citizens had settled abroad and their remittances stimulated aggregate demand and economic activity in Colombia. The extent to which such resource flows benefited national and economic development depended on whether they were channelled towards productive activities.

3. Her country had implemented strategies to strengthen ties with Colombian communities abroad and facilitate the channelling of remittances to the country and towards saving and investment. Tax reforms had eliminated a 3 per cent tax on remittances. Studies were under way to assess the micro- and macroeconomic impact of remittances in various regions of the country and Colombia participated in forums concerning migration and remittances under the aegis of the Multilateral Investment Fund of the Inter-American Development Bank. The Colombian private sector, in keeping with a spirit of corporate responsibility, was developing a solidarity network to enable Colombians abroad and at home to contribute to specific local and regional projects with a high social impact.

4. **Mr. Skinner-Klée** (Guatemala), turning first to agenda item 54 (d), said that corruption was a multifaceted scourge requiring a comprehensive approach and that those who received or requested illicit funds were as culpable as those who offered and accepted them. He underscored the nefarious impact of corruption on society and of the role of powerful groups such as those involved in international drug trafficking and organized crime. At their worst, such groups could hijack State structures, thereby eroding legitimacy, undermining institutions and, consequently, diverting resources, delaying development and undermining the credibility of democratic government. Regional and international cooperation were crucial to enable Governments to develop common strategies in the fight against corruption. To that end, his country had taken steps both to comply with its international commitments and to meet its national obligations, particularly those assumed within the framework of the Agreement on a Firm and Lasting Peace. His country was a party to the Inter-American Convention against Corruption and was in the process of ratifying the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Various government bodies had been established, legislation had been adopted, measures to monitor financial operations had been introduced and an anti-corruption unit and an internal audit unit had been established.

5. Turning to agenda item 54 (c), he welcomed all the activities planned by the United Nations system at the regional and subregional levels to address the issue of migration. In that connection, he noted that a regional conference on migration had concluded the previous week in Guatemala, and he expressed his delegation's appreciation for the initiative of the Government of Peru to host a special international conference on migration in April 2006. In keeping with its commitment to protect the human and labour rights

of migrants, his Government was working with Mexico to assist and protect Guatemalan migrants in Mexican territory as well as migrants from other countries who passed through Guatemala. In addition, a draft law to assist migrants living in Guatemala who met certain basic criteria was under consideration.

6. The High-level Dialogue on migration proposed for 2006 should clarify many questions and misunderstandings with respect to the complex issue of international migration and development, in which a comprehensive approach was essential.

7. **Mr. Hackett** (Barbados), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the report of the Secretary-General on agenda item 54 (a) (A/60/322) provided a good basis for advancing the Committee's work aimed at harnessing the potential of globalization, in particular in order to make global markets work for the poor. The main challenge was to enable developing countries meaningfully to benefit from their integration into the world economy and achieve economic growth, not as an end in itself but as a means of generating significant and equitably distributed improvements in living conditions for their people.

8. As globalization had intensified, the small economies of CARICOM countries had encountered serious adjustment problems owing to their size. In that connection, he drew attention to various disruptions and challenges that had affected their traditional export trade in bananas and sugar. Although globalization would continue to create both opportunities and risks, considerable benefits could be derived from trade, particularly with existing technology and know-how. As indicated in paragraph 66 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the international community should give special attention to the special needs and vulnerabilities of small island developing States. That category included the CARICOM countries.

9. Strong, well-functioning and adaptive institutions helped to create an enabling environment that could facilitate globalization. However, inherent national and regional structural challenges impeded the successful integration of developing countries into the global economy. CARICOM therefore urged greater recognition in the rule-making process of the fact that global economic integration had different implications for different States, and that the small island States required special consideration. Support in the areas of trade, migration, foreign direct investment and technology transfer would be particularly welcome.

10. The report in document A/60/322 overemphasized the role of markets in effecting successful economic integration. CARICOM supported flexible growth strategies, increased policy space and autonomy and stressed the importance of strengthening the ability of formal and informal local institutions to meet the dictates of the global economy, with a focus on pro-poor growth and sustainable development.

11. The member States of CARICOM called for: increased international cooperation for the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy, particularly by promoting international trade as an engine for development; acceptance of the principles of special and differential treatment in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and in other regional arrangements; alignment of global trade rules with the promotion of sustainable human development; broader emphasis on tourism and financial services, particularly with respect to fair and competitive trade; and promotion of conditions conducive to increasing productivity, generating economic growth and fostering job creation.

12. Turning to agenda item 54 (d), he said that the transfer of funds of illicit origin had a negative impact on the legitimate expansion of business, thereby impeding foreign direct investment. Money-laundering increased poverty, fostered crime and facilitated terrorism. A number of member States of CARICOM had ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption and others had either indicated their willingness to do so or had begun preparations to finalize the process.

13. Despite the financial burden involved in fighting corruption, the member States of CARICOM would continue to work closely with their counterpart financial intelligence units in the international community in order to combat all forms of corrupt and illicit acts.

14. **Ms. Interiano** (El Salvador), turning first to agenda item 54 (b), said that it was essential to promote capacity-building in science and technology in developing countries and to facilitate their access to technology, in particular information and communications technology for development. Those tools were required in order to enhance the competitiveness of developing countries and assist

them in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Given the key role of education in fostering progress in those areas, her country's Ministry of Education had launched a programme to provide the technological tools required to boost academic achievement.

15. With regard to agenda item 54 (c), her delegation welcomed the statement on international migration and development contained in the 2005 World Summit Outcome. A comprehensive approach to the topic was needed, dealing with the impact of migration and its relationship to development, with a focus on women who migrated and those who remained in their countries of origin.

16. Although migrants' remittances were very important to their families, they should never be considered a substitute for official development assistance. Her country had taken steps to facilitate the transfer of remittances and to channel them more towards savings than spending, in order to increase their value to families. It had also signed and ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

17. The High-level Dialogue on migration to be held in 2006 should provide insight regarding the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development in order to identify ways to maximize development benefits. It should also encourage continued dialogue and cooperation among countries of origin, transit countries and receiving countries. The Population Division should conduct panel discussions to coordinate activities on international migration and should provide participating countries with useful input for the High-level Dialogue, and countries should share their experience on the subject.

18. **Ms. Bauzán de Senes** (Uruguay) said that knowledge was concentrated in the developed world because access to technological innovations was related to income level. That trend could be reversed, however, by providing people with better tools for growth and development. One such tool was UN-Biotech. For 10 years, Uruguay had worked with one of the UN-Biotech members, the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, which had offered technical training and financing for research projects at both the national and Latin American regional levels. Sufficient resources must be made available for the Centre's many activities in the fields of health, nutrition, industrial development, environmental protection, energy production, molecular genetics and molecular biology.

19. At the 2005 World Summit, Heads of State and Government had pledged to help developing countries benefit from scientific and technological advances, including information and communication technologies. Every effort must be made to find ways to improve and strengthen existing mechanisms to facilitate developing countries' access to technology and development. That commitment should also underpin the work of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held shortly in Tunis.

20. **Mr. Abdelsalam** (Sudan) said that, of the many themes covered by the Secretary-General's report on science and technology for development (A/60/184), the Sudan attached particular importance to agriculture and food, as its economy was agriculture-based. It was grateful for the work of the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, and planned to intensify cooperation with the Centre with a view to enhancing its development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

21. **Ms. Gunasekera** (Sri Lanka) cautioned against a "one-size-fits-all" approach to integrating countries into the global economy and noted that, as the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization drew near, trade barriers still blocked the exports of developing countries seeking to open their economies.

22. She stressed the importance of international cooperation on migration issues in order to ensure the humane and effective movement of people across borders, and urged those Member States which had not yet done so to become parties to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

23. Remittances, a significant source of foreign exchange for many developing countries, helped to offset the trade deficit on their current accounts, and had a direct and immediate impact on receiving communities. Aware that a significant portion of worker remittances were still entering the country through informal channels and were subject to misuse by terrorists and other criminal elements, the State banks of Sri Lanka had expanded their network of branches throughout the country. The Government was

encouraging investment and long-term financial planning among returnee migrant workers by offering an array of credit schemes, and State banks had raised interest rates for foreign currency accounts and other loan benefits to encourage savings. Migration had contributed significantly to reducing unemployment and poverty in Sri Lanka, especially in the rural area, and returning migrants infused knowledge, skills and technology into society.

24. Welcoming the forthcoming High-level Dialogue on migration and development, she said that the time had come to mainstream migration policy into the United Nations agenda. In that connection, she noted the untapped potential of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) policy and conceptual discussions and the findings of the Global Commission on International Migration.

25. The World Summit Outcome stressed the importance of science and technology in the achievement of development goals and the need for international support to help developing countries to benefit from technological advances and enhance their productive capacity.

26. Sri Lanka had ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption and attached great importance to its imminent entry into force. Concerned at the serious effects of corruption on both economies and politics around the world, it was strongly committed to fighting corruption. Her country was also a signatory of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. At home, Sri Lanka was attempting to enhance the effectiveness of its criminal justice process by strengthening its national laws relating to investigations and trials. Combating corruption, however, required not only action by individual Governments but international cooperation as well.

27. **Mr. Al-Athba** (Qatar) said that a "one-size-fits-all" approach to development, with excessive reliance on the market mechanism and a minimized role for the State, was insufficient to meet development challenges in a globalized world. Trade policies and development strategies must reflect country-specific national interests and potentials. Developing countries needed policy space with regard to international commitments undertaken in the areas of trade, investment and industrial policy, particularly within the context of the WTO negotiations, in their relations with international financial institutions and with regard to conditionalities attached to official financing, adjustment programmes and debt relief.

28. He welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on building institutions (A/60/322), as evidence suggested that weak institutions were in some measure responsible for the poor economic performance of the developing countries. His delegation appreciated the report's broad approach to the question. Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals would require strong institutional support for economic activities and mediation of conflicting interests in the development process. In attempting to restructure and reform their economies, developing countries had been hampered by the size of their markets and the imperfect flow of information that prevented their markets from operating as expected. The role of Governments and institutions was therefore crucial.

29. Strong and effective institutions to promote economic activity and development were necessary in order to achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development. His delegation agreed that, to some extent, institutional differences among countries were partly responsible for differences in income and standards of living. Institutions should respond to the particular needs of the country concerned and to the needs of the poor. They should promote cohesion, not difference.

30. His delegation fully supported the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General. It might be necessary to follow up the report with focused discussions led by various United Nations entities.

31. **Mr. Alsaker** (Norway) welcomed the action-oriented report of the Global Commission on International Migration, and the broad and long-term perspective of its recommendations. Better coordination among the various organizations dealing with international migration ould increase efficiency and policy consistency, as well as the pooling and exchange of expertise. In following up the report at the national level, it would accord priority to fulfilling the recommendation on coherence and coordination.

32. There was a need for greater focus on the role of remittances and the World Bank's emphasis on the issue was welcome. Clearly, there was scope for synergy between the United Nations and the World Bank in that respect, and perhaps even for an

intensified and sustained North-South dialogue on migration. The follow-up to the report must take a broad approach to migration and related issues. The Global Migration Facility proposed in the report could represent a step towards ensuring coherency.

33. In conclusion, his delegation was in general agreement with the modalities for the High-level Dialogue on migration and development during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly.

34. **Mr. Massieu** (Mexico) said that the High-level Dialogue on international migration and development was an opportunity for the United Nations to seek ways to maximize the development benefits that migration brought to countries of origin, destination and transit. Member States should discuss all aspects of international migration and development at the meeting and organizational arrangements should be made to that effect.

35. At the 2005 World Summit, Heads of State and Government had reaffirmed their resolve to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants, migrant workers and members of their families. The High-level Dialogue would provide a forum to discuss measures adopted in that area and to examine ways to strengthen international cooperation.

36. In the World Summit Outcome (A/60/L.1), the Heads of State and Government acknowledged the need to reduce the cost of transferring migrant remittances. The High-level Dialogue would serve as an occasion for countries to exchange their successful experiences and identify global measures to maximize the positive impact of remittances on the families of migrant workers. The recommendations in the report of the Global Commission on International Migration would undoubtedly contribute to the discussions and other meetings on international migration and development.

37. While agreeing with a number of delegations on the importance of bilateral and regional mechanisms that dealt with the issue of migration, Mexico believed that international migration and its links with development also deserved to be examined from a wider standpoint. The High-level Dialogue would constitute a first step towards global decisions on migration at the highest level.

38. **Ms. Ogwu** (Nigeria) said that participants in the 2005 World Summit had committed themselves to promoting the development of the productive sectors of developing countries to enable them to participate more effectively in and benefit from the process of globalization. However, globalization did not provide equal benefits for all.

39. Underscoring the linkages between macroeconomic policy questions and sustainable development, she referred to the Secretary-General's report (A/60/163), which revealed that the net transfer of financial resources from developing to developed countries had reached an estimated $350 billion in 2004. That aberration had resulted in a reduction in resources available for domestic consumption and investment and could be attributed to market reforms, unbridled trade liberalization and external debt servicing obligations. Efforts at integration into the world economy, including years of experimentation with economic and political reforms, had fallen short of expectations, particularly in Africa. Accountability and transparency, among other factors, should underpin the operation of all institutions.

40. Sustainable development could be guaranteed only if there was demonstrable ownership, which took into account national circumstances, priorities and needs. The growing phenomenon of "self insurance" through the accumulation of foreign reserves by many developing countries called for strengthening of the international financial architecture to prevent and better manage financial crises which, in turn, would ensure stability and help those countries attain their national development goals. Strong regulatory policies were required to mitigate the impact of macroeconomic shocks on developing countries.

41. Nigeria was determined to pursue its objectives set out in its National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), a comprehensive framework for achieving sustainable development and the eradication of poverty.

42. There was a need for fairer standards for competition among unequal partners; the Doha Round should reaffirm the principles of special and differential treatment for the developing world as a whole. Concerted action was required to ensure the representation of developing countries in international financial and trading institutions, stronger international governance and the democratization of multilateral institutions.

43. Convinced that science and technology were key for achieving sustainable development, Nigeria had established a national information technology development agency. Developed and developing countries should cooperate in that area and reduce obstacles arising from trade-related aspects of international property rights, which impeded the transfer of technology on affordable and mutually beneficial terms.

44. Migration involved not only North-South movement but also considerable South-South movement. Both developed and developing countries had derived enormous benefits from migration and it was in the collective interest to appreciate the complex relationship between migration and development. At the High-level Dialogue on international migration and development in 2006, Member States should reach consensus on the need to maximize the benefits and minimize the negative impacts of migration. Any dialogue on the role of migration in the development process should also address issues such as the differential treatment of migrants, the loss of quality skills in the home countries and the "push and pull" factors of international migration.

45. Nigeria reaffirmed its commitment to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and had created two commissions to deal with financial crimes and corrupt practices. For the first time in its democratic history, it had charged high-ranking officials with corruption. She called for international cooperation in that area and commended the Government of Switzerland for returning funds that had been looted from the Nigerian Treasury. She called on other Member States to cooperate in the return of illicit assets to their countries of origin as a demonstration of their commitment to fight corruption. It was in the long-term interest of the international community to cooperate in sharing information, to build capacities for investigation, prosecution and enforcement of laws, and to collaborate in preventive measures. Nigeria also supported the Legislative Guide to the Convention against Corruption prepared by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and urged all Member States which had not ratified the Convention to take steps to do so.

46. **Mr. Filip** (Observer for the Inter-Parliamentary Union), referring to the recent report of the Global Commission on International Migration, said that he agreed with the observation that migration had proved to be a politically explosive issue in a significant number of countries, even to the extent of determining the outcome of several elections. At the Union's 113th Assembly, a resolution on a report prepared by two parliamentarians, one from Mexico and the other from Switzerland, had been adopted only on condition that a number of reservations be attached.

47. Members of parliaments were at the forefront of the debate, because the issue of migrants had become a significant political factor throughout the world. Parliaments were regularly called on to legislate on such matters as immigration law and welfare rights for immigrants. Issues such as xenophobia and the social and economic integration of migrants were regularly on their agendas. To add to the complexity, countries were becoming both senders and receivers of migrants, as well as transit countries, so that all sides of the equation often had to be simultaneously addressed at the national level. What emerged clearly from the debate was the need for parliamentarians to play an active role in raising awareness of the many challenges of migration within their constituencies and the population at large.

48. The resolution adopted at the 113th Assembly had focused on identifying the reasons for migration and the ways in which forced migration could be prevented. The Union was therefore developing technical assistance projects, seminars and publications to support and strengthen democratic institutions and good governance. On the economic front, its efforts were primarily devoted to promoting fair trade relations so that workers in developing countries could earn a decent living and Governments could strengthen social safety nets.

49. In view of the increasing feminization of migration, new policy approaches must be designed to deal with the particular circumstances of migrant women and children, in particular the problem of trafficking. The resolution called on Governments to promote a gender-sensitive approach to migration and trafficking. The Union had recently published a handbook for parliamentarians on combating child trafficking, in cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The resolution also stressed the need for policy coherence, as the multiple dimensions of migration had often resulted in contradictory laws and regulations. To restore conceptual clarity and practical order, migration policies should be coordinated at the national level

between the relevant ministries and other governmental bodies and agencies.

50. Migration was an evolving issue requiring hard choices which parliamentarians, in consultation with their constituencies, were ideally situated to address. They should therefore be regarded as key partners in implementing solutions. The Union was encouraged by the cooperation developed with the Global Commission on International Migration with a view to bringing a parliamentary dimension to the process. It looked forward to the High-level Dialogue in 2006 as an opportunity to further that goal.

51. **Mr. Jomo** (Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development), responding to comments on the Secretary-General's report on globalization and interdependence (A/60/322), said that the report was not an exhaustive analysis of the question of institutions and their importance for beneficial integration in the global economy. Neither was it meant to provide suggestions for specific actions in areas being addressed by the General Assembly under other agenda items. At best, it was an endeavour to explore further the question of what precisely was meant by institutions and how such institutions should be built, while taking into account the specific needs of each country.

52. As regards the issue of institutions for the efficient functioning of markets, the report merely defined the nature of the challenge and did not urge developing countries to build institutions in isolation or at the expense of their social and environmental priorities. It pointed out that the supportive institutional arrangements might vary, given the level of development and specific national and regional contexts.

53. Countries needed institutions not only to support markets but also to mitigate the impacts of open and liberalized markets. Although trade liberalization brought benefits, it also had costs in terms of loss of revenues generated by tariffs or loss of jobs. Similarly, if the least developed countries lost their trade preferences, institutional arrangements were required to address that challenge. However, the report did not recommend any specific type of institution.

54. The report advocated policy space and stressed that institutional forms, whether public or private, formal or informal, could not simply be packaged and distributed as a "one-size-fits-all" solution. Developing countries should be provided with the space and autonomy required to experiment and devise institutional innovations most appropriate to their needs.

55. Human resources, infrastructure and managing skills were essential for building effective institutions, and the issue of capacity-building had been duly recognized in the report. Developing countries had specifically requested that "institutional development" be a central element of support provided by the development partners. The need to strengthen the voice and participation of developing countries in decision-making had been stressed, as had the need for global institutional coherence in trade, finance, investment and technology.

56. The report did not make concrete recommendations because institutional requirements varied from country to country. It rather sought to offer a provocative menu of issues that could be followed up on a "case-by-case" basis. That view was reflected in recommendation (h) on expert-level meetings that gave countries the opportunity to work with different development partners on matters tailored to their needs.

57. **Ms. Zlotnik** (Director, Population Division) welcomed the national responses to the report in document A/60/205, the recommendations of the Global Commission on International Migration and Committee members' suggestions on preparations for the High-level Dialogue. The Division had published an analysis of the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development in the context of the Global Commission's recommendations and would be undertaking similar studies on other United Nations conferences of the 1990s. Those inputs and other assistance would be made available to interested delegations during the preparatory phase.

58. **Ms. De Winter** (Programme Officer, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) said that, in discussing the report of the Secretary-General on preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets to the countries of origin (A/60/157), several delegations had recognized that corruption was a complex, social, political and economic phenomena that affected every aspect of society. It caused reduced investment or even disinvestment, with many long-term effects, including social polarization, lack of

respect for the rule of law and human rights, undemocratic practices and diversion of funds intended for development and essential services.

59. Regional training seminars organized by the Office, together with some of the regional pre-ratification seminars she had mentioned in her introductory statement, should assist prosecutors in undertaking asset recovery, a fundamental principle of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.